

Supervision Models and Supervisory Feedback in English Language Teacher Education: A Meta-Synthesis Study Adopting a Discourse Analytic Perspective

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Abstract

This meta-synthesis reviewed and synthesized the findings of 53 studies on supervisory post-conferences and feedback with a total of 807 participants published between 2004-2023. The aim of this meta-synthesis was to illustrate the trends in the reviewed studies and synthesize the results of the studies on supervisory discourse and models of supervision in the field of English language teaching. The criteria for eligibility for selection were being empirical, peer-reviewed, and published in English. Articles were scanned through the Web of Science, ERIC, SCOPUS, and Google Scholar till July, 2023. The studies lacking a report of detailed and clear-cut data collection and analysis phases were removed in the appraisal phase to avoid a risk of bias. The results indicated that supervisors implemented directive supervisory styles as well as collaborative approaches exploiting power dynamics such as expert power. The findings also showed that the use of conversational techniques such as mediation, mitigators, and elicitation in supervisory talk play a central role in supervising English language teachers. The results suggested that supervised teachers demonstrated confronting, autonomous, and fluid identities when faced with a directive style of supervision. The limitations of evidence for this study related the search strategy, participants and variations in educational settings.

Keywords: English language teaching, supervisory feedback, supervision approaches, mentoring, meta-synthesis

Supervision in Language Teaching

Throughout the journey to excel in teaching career, supervisor or mentor feedback has had an essential place in the professional development of teachers. In every phase of learning to become a teacher, there has been a need to get guidance and support to alleviate the responsibilities of being a teacher (Copland, 2010). Post-observation conferences, conducted as part of the supervision process, have been providing spheres for delivering feedback to English language teachers to aid them in their teaching practices. While delivering feedback, supervisors have been pointing out the powerful aspects of teaching practice as well as the areas in need of improvement to enhance teachers' awareness, alter undesirable parts of teaching practices, and advance teaching (Bailey, 2006). However, supervisors might sometimes be confronted with struggles during this process, as criticizing the lesson of another teacher could be a gruesome task. It would be hard to not be overly critical and at the same time promote a collaborative dialogue.

For this reason, researchers up to date have strived to engage in eliminating these persistent difficulties in supervision (Lewis & Wagner, 2023a, 2023b; Lin et al., 2019). One way that researchers have tackled this issue was through analyzing the discourse of the post-observation conferences through discourse analytic procedures to comprehend how teachers acquire information, transform professionally and conduct high quality supervision in the world (Bailey, 2009). As Bailey (2009) put forward, "principles of sociocultural theory and discourse analysis offer teacher educators ways to improve upon the practice of language teacher supervision" (p. 275).

Throughout this meta-synthesis, a discourse analytic perspective under the framework of supervision approaches has been adopted. Supervisory styles using a variety of feedback mechanisms for the professional development of teachers have been described. For instance, Goldsberry's (1988) prescriptive and reflective models of supervision have been discussed. While the prescriptive model has referred to the roles of the supervisor such as aligning teachers with the standards and rules, finding weaknesses or deficiencies in teaching practices, and prescribing solutions to the deficiencies, the reflective supervisory model has centered on supervisors' being aware of the characteristics of contextual differences, learner needs, goals, and teaching practices that arise from an interrelationship between these factors.

The concepts we focused on this article varied from autonomy and power, and mitigation of supervisory discourse to scaffolding of language teacher supervisees. Our argument is based on the belief that the classic prescriptive approach in which an authority figure demonstrates expert power is not any more ideal. Although supervisors may still have power over language teachers to some extent, language teachers also could have some amount of power over their supervisors; for instance, teachers can oppose or overlook supervisors' suggestions for adjustments in their teaching practices (Bailey, 2006). Throughout this paper, we would be discussing the power types discovered in our synthesis of the studies' findings. The first type, position power or also named as legitimate power relates to authority gained through an official rank. The second kind found in supervisory discourse is specified as expert power, which is associated with power stemming from expertise, skills, and knowledge carried by the supervisors. Reward power is another type that is related to the person's ability to deliver rewards such as positive comments, promotions, etc. (Bolman & Deal, 1997). Thus, supervisors' use of these power types as well as the responses of the supervisees with

demonstration of confronting identities in the face of unbalanced power relations will be the main points in our discussion.

Commenting on a person's teaching practice is a hard task even if the evaluation is made by a peer or a colleague. In the cases when the supervisor is a person who holds a more powerful position, has more experience or is older, there can be the presence of unequal power discourse threatening the face of the supervisees. "The supervisor's speech acts, then, call for *politeness strategies* to mitigate interference with self-determination (negative face) and approval or self-esteem (positive face)" (Roberts, 1992, p. 290). Thus, in these situations, one way to compromise face threatening acts (FTAs) is the use of mitigation. Mitigation is "linguistic means by which a speaker deliberately hedges what he / she is saying by taking into account the reactions of the hearer" (Wajnryb, 1995, p. 71). Above-the-utterance-level mitigation is a type of mitigation that can be adopted in order to soften criticisms at the discourse level.

Additionally, other types of mitigation strategies that could be adopted are syntactic, semantic and indirect mitigations. At the syntactic level, speakers might apply interrogative structures to instigate doubts concerning the interlocutor's intended message. Using modal verbs like 'might' and 'may' and clause structures such as subordination through the use of phrases such as 'I think' by putting the face threatening acts in the embedded clauses and distancing these acts also helps to mitigate criticisms at the syntactic level. As to semantic mitigation devices, qualm indicators such as 'well', 'you know' and hedging modifiers like 'a bit' and 'just' are employed to inform that the interlocutor is kind of uncertain and decrease the negative impact (Wajnryb, 1995). Wajnryb (1994) also supports the use of indirect mitigation arguing that "in the context of supervision and specifically in the delivery of FTAs, indirectness furnishes supervisors with an important means of resolving the competing demands of their role – the need to save face vis-à-vis the transmission of bad news messages" (p. 299).

Moreover, commenting on teaching practice of teachers in the post-observation conferences at the meta or macro level through meta or macro comments is another way of conducting the trainee-trainer talk by considering the context, purposes and subject in addition to the use of linguistic devices at the micro level in the supervisory discourse, which refer to the characteristics of the actual talk (Engin, 2015).

It has been proposed in this study that adopting both approaches might help interpret the discourse analytic convention through a dual mode of analysis. Moreover, the use of scaffolding in trainer talk has been discovered as a common practice in the literature (Engin, 2013a; Engin, 2015; Mehrpour & Agheshteh, 2017; Yoon & Kim, 2019). The use of scaffolding to support language teachers during the supervision process would help enhance their professional development. For this purpose, scaffolding could be realized through eliciting information from learners by means of direct and cued elicitations, replying to learners' utterances with elaborations, confirmations, rejections, and reformulations, and defining important points of shared knowledge by means of we statements, reconstructive and literal recaps (Mercer, 1995; 2000). Other linguistic elements that are suggested for use by supervisors in teacher-supervisor post-conferences are recalls, appraisals, rules, and artifacts. Recalls are explicit recreations of teaching events in the classroom by the teachers. Appraisals refer to value judgements concerning the recalled events. Rules are standards or methodological approaches that teachers derive from their experiences, while artifacts are the instruments teachers bring to the classroom. The conduct of the supervisory discourse based on these elements have also been advocated to have an effective supervision session (Mena et

al., 2016). Thus, the use of a variety of linguistic devices in supervisory discourse has been discussed in relation to supervision models, power dynamics and autonomy in the synthesis of the outcomes of the selected studies.

To date, to the authors' knowledge no recent meta-synthesis studies have been conducted on the supervisory practices of English language teachers from a discourse analytic perspective. There were a number of reviews depicting the supervisory experiences of English language teachers, but these reviews had different focal points (Asención Delaney, 2012; Lawson et al., 2015). For instance, Lawson et al.'s (2015) study, reviewed the teaching practicum experiences on a broader basis using themes such as school–university partnership, perceptions and beliefs of pre-service teachers (PSTs) and the quality of practicum. Conversely, this meta-synthesis offers a focused attention on the supervisory feedback practices of English language teachers from the lens of a discourse analytic perspective. Thus, the emphasis in our synthesis is to describe the fundamental characteristics of an effective interaction between supervisors and English language supervisee teachers. Thus, the aim of this paper is to demonstrate the latest trends in the studies on supervisory discourse in terms of aims, methodologies, settings and participants, and outcomes in these studies exploring the supervisory practices in terms of the nature of the feedback given and the contributions of the feedback to language teachers' professional development. The main rationale behind this meta-synthesis study is to help English language teachers in their professional development through gaining an insight into the nature of feedback delivered in post-conferences and demonstrate that supervisory interaction (e.g., monologic, dialogic, authoritative etc.) impacts issues such as power relationships between supervisees and supervisors, and consequently factors such as motivation and autonomy of teachers. Thus, adopting a discourse-analytic perspective, the studies leaning on supervisory feedback in post-lesson conferences were reviewed and synthesized in this meta-synthesis study with the aim of illustrating the nature of supervisory talk given during the internship period of pre-service English language teachers as well as in-service teacher development programs. In line with this aim the following research questions have been generated:

1. What are the aims, research methodology, settings, participants, and main findings of the studies published between 2004 and 2023 on the supervision of pre- and in-service English language teachers?
2. What are the main features of an effective supervisory interaction in the supervision of English language teachers in terms of a discourse analytic perspective?
3. What is the nature of the pedagogies of mentoring, roles adopted by supervisors and supervisees and power dynamics enacted in the supervision of English language teachers?

This review is divided into five dimensions. In the first part, the aims of the studies are reviewed. The second section is based on the methodology of these studies. The third part illustrates an overall view of the settings and participants in the reviewed articles. The fourth part discusses the outcomes of the synthesized studies. The following sections discuss the results of the synthesized studies under the topics of discourse analysis, pedagogies of mentoring, the roles of supervisors, supervisees and power dynamics from the perspectives of supervisees and supervisors.

Materials and Methods

In this study a qualitative meta-synthesis methodology has been used to analyze and synthesize the findings of supervisory feedback practices in the English language teaching field. A meta-synthesis is “a review of a clearly formulated question that uses systematic and explicit methods to identify, select, critically appraise relevant research and to collect and analyze data from the studies that are included” (Moher et al., 2009, p. 874). According to Petticrew and Roberts (2006), meta-syntheses are tools that help readers to interpret a bulk of information and experiment with effective or ineffective implementations in the field to illuminate the research areas in which more studies need to be conducted. A synthesis of the qualitative studies is well-founded in the sense that a cumulative report of the results of individual studies may lead towards a united understanding towards the research problem at hand (Walsh & Downe, 2005). The steps identified by Cooper (2017) and the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines by Moher et al. (2009) and Page et al. (2021) for carrying out systematic reviews have been followed in the synthesis of the studies in this article. The PRISMA statement guides researchers to carry out systematic reviews, meta synthesis, and meta-analysis studies with a transparent description of data search, selection, appraisal, reporting and synthesis of the results.

For the purpose of specifying studies to be included in this meta-synthesis, an exhaustive search for articles have been carried out in the databases from the year 2004 to the year 2023, consisting of articles in journals and book chapters adopting qualitative methodologies. The search process included the subsequent steps. In the first phase, relevant keywords have been constructed based on a close reading of the literature. After a trial process of keywords to be adopted for article search, the following query strings were used across the SCOPUS, Web of Science (WoS), and Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) databases and Google Scholar:

- (1) "*school mentor*" and "*EFL*" or "*ESL*",
- (2) "*university supervisor*" and "*EFL*" or "*ESL*",
- (3) "*cooperating teacher*" and "*EFL*" or "*ESL*",
- (4) "*supervisory models*" and "*EFL*" or "*ESL*",
- (5) "*supervision types*" and "*EFL*" or "*ESL*",
- (6) "*practicum*" and "*EFL*" or "*ESL*",
- (7) "*practicum feedback*" and "*EFL*" or "*ESL*",
- (8) "*supervisory feedback*" and "*EFL*" or "*ESL*",
- (9) "*reflective feedback*" and "*EFL*" or "*ESL*",
- (10) "*the nature of feedback*" and "*EFL*" or "*ESL*",
- (11) "*mentor feedback*" and "*conversation analysis*" and "*English*",
- (12) "*feedback*" and "*post-observation*" and "*EFL*" or "*ESL*", and
- (13) "*feedback*" and "*post-conference*" and "*EFL*" or "*ESL*".

Based on their performance in retrieval of articles, Gusenbauer and Haddaway (2020) suggest 28 databases for article selection. SCOPUS, Web of Science and ERIC are among databases suggested for reviews. These databases were selected for this study because they cover academic research in the field of education, which supports the research objectives of this study. The inclusion and exclusion criteria differed for each database depending on the specific qualities and functionalities of the browsers. The articles accessed through ERIC were restricted to peer reviewed and full-text publications, whereas WoS and Scopus also covered

articles in the final publication phase. Using Scopus and WoS, the results could be further filtered for the social sciences fields. Google Scholar was also used to review gray literature and thus “reduce publication bias, increase reviews’ comprehensiveness and timeliness” (Paez, 2017, p. 233). After the problem was identified, the literature has been reviewed in Web of Science, ERIC, SCOPUS, and Google Scholar using the key terms demonstrated in Table 1. towards the aim of collecting more information regarding the research problems.

Table 1. Search terms used in Web of Science, ERIC, SCOPUS, and Google Scholar

Concepts relating to stakeholders (OR)	<u>AND</u> Exploration of feedback (OR)	<u>AND</u> Terminology of the subject (OR)	<u>AND</u> Theoretical framework/ method (OR)	<u>AND</u> Donating setting (OR)
in-service teacher	feedback	post-conference	conversation analysis	(EFL) <u>OR</u> (ESL)
school mentor	practicum feedback	practicum	supervisory models	
university supervisor	supervisory feedback	post-observation	supervision types	
cooperating teacher	reflective feedback			
pre-service teacher	the nature of feedback			

Figure 1 illustrates the article review process. This qualitative meta-synthesis excluded the studies that did not demonstrate characteristics of rigorous and transparent collection and analysis of data (Walsh & Downe, 2006). The quality evaluation of the initially screened studies was conducted based on a number of criteria. The articles were selected to be included in the synthesis on the basis of following key points: (1) the aims of the study are explicitly stated, (2) the methodology selected is compatible for the aims of the research, (3) the research process is adequately evidenced, (4) the research questions are sufficiently responded, and (5) the main results are transparently reported. The articles not meeting these standards were excluded from synthesis. The selected studies for this meta-synthesis are indicated with an asterisk sign in the reference section and also tabulated in the appendix.

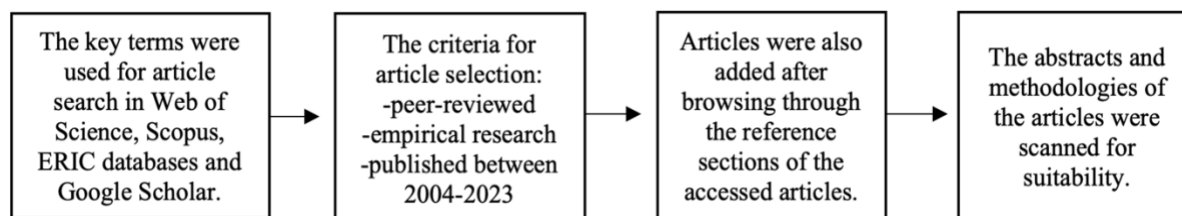


Figure 1. Article review process

The journals in the area of teacher education and mentoring were exploited. Table 2. shows the evaluation criteria used in the process of article selection. To minimize the impact of the publication bias, along with book chapters, conference proceedings have also been considered to be included in this study. On the other hand, theoretical and conceptual articles were excluded from the analysis. However, there were no conference papers meeting our eligibility

criteria such as transparent and rigorous reporting and discussion of the findings. We focused merely on pure qualitative studies or studies that favored qualitative aspects in mixed method designs. Studies reporting the experiences of both pre-service and in-service English language teachers were selected to be used in this synthesis. Moreover, only articles published in English have been included in this study.

Table 2. The evaluation criteria for article selection

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
<i>Focus of article</i>	Pre-service or in-service English language teacher supervision	
<i>Publication date</i>	2004 - 2023	Prior to 2004 and after 2023
<i>Publication type</i>	Peer-reviewed articles, book chapters and conference papers	Editorials and unpublished dissertations
<i>Language</i>	Articles published in English	Articles published in other languages
<i>Research methods and results</i>	Qualitative or qualitative-weighted mixed-methods	Theoretical and conceptual articles

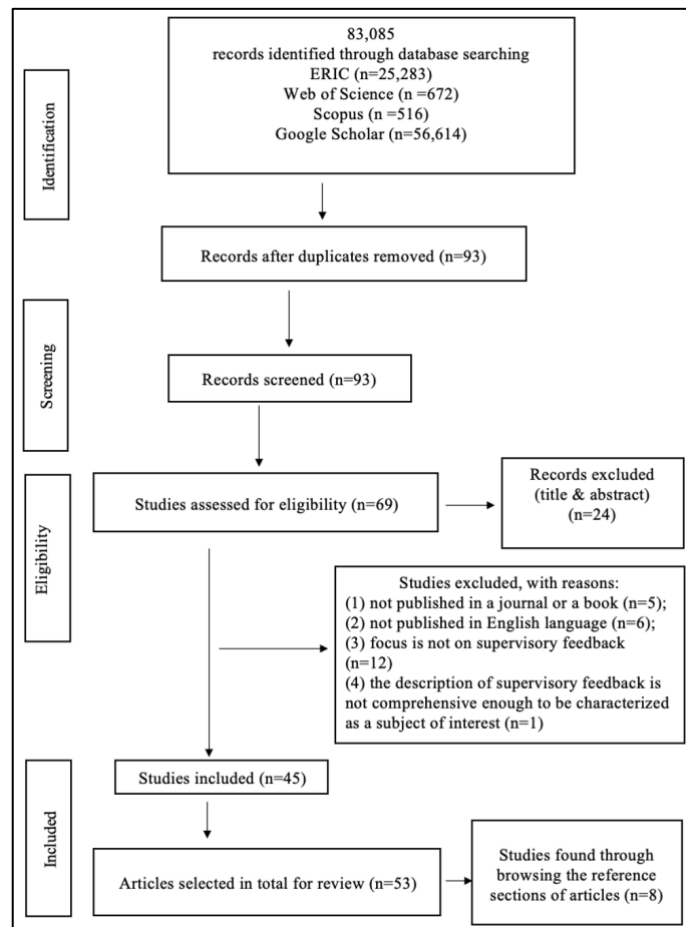


Figure 2. PRISMA flow chart

Figure 2 demonstrates the PRISMA flow chart of the article search and selection process of the selected studies. The two authors of the manuscript agreed on the selection of the studies to be synthesized so as to increase reliability. After the article selection process, data extraction

tables were constructed to analyze the 53 chosen articles. Findings of the selected studies have been analyzed through a meta-aggregative approach to form broad categories and subcategories, which would encompass synthesizing the outcomes established on the basis of similarity (Munn et al., 2014). The themes for this study have been constructed after a constant and ongoing comparative qualitative coding process following Glaser and Strauss' (1967) Grounded Theory. The outcomes of the selected articles have been coded in line with the constant comparative method. The researchers created a data extraction table so as to obtain patterns in terms of existing research. The following categories were described in the extraction table: 'research questions', 'contexts', 'participants', and 'methodologies'. The main research outcomes of the studies were also incorporated as data in order to synthesize the effective implementations of English language teachers' supervision through post-teaching conference talk in the supervision process. Following the scheme of grounded theory, key concepts of the main outcomes in each study were determined and synthesized through open, axial and selective coding phases. In the open coding phase, the obtained codes were written word-for-word to ease the coding and calculating the instances of codes and to compare the major themes of the studies. The codes in the synthesized studies were organized into the initial categories. In the axial coding step, all the interconnecting codes and categories were reconstructed under descriptive themes. The unrelated codes that could not be put under any categories were removed, and alike codes were aggregated into a unified code. The two coders have agreed on the following themes for presenting the research outcomes: (1) discourse analytic perspectives and (2) pedagogies of mentoring, the roles enacted by supervisors and power dynamics. Figure 3 demonstrates a sample of a coding procedure from our data.

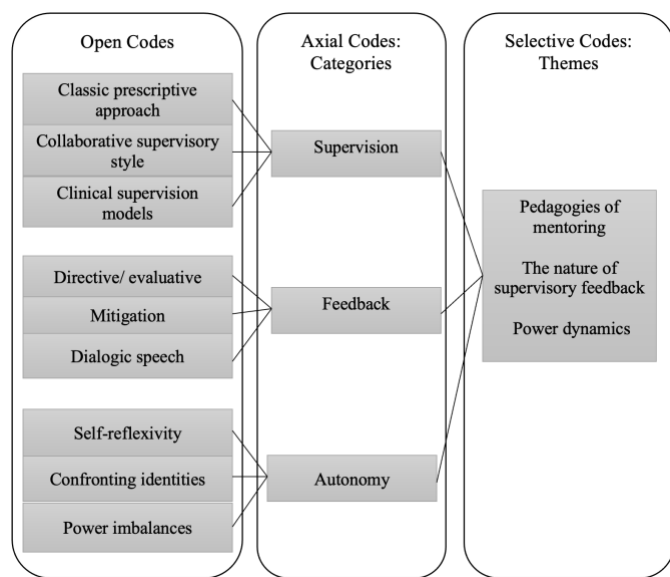


Figure 3. The coding process of research outcomes of the synthesized studies

Results

The Aims in the Reviewed Studies

The findings showed that the studies mainly focused on the different supervision styles enacted in educational settings. For instance, studies explored the impact of models like collaborative mentoring model with dyadic and tripartite conferences on the professional development of mentees and school mentors (Kuter, 2016), dialogic reflection in problem-posing approach of

mentoring (Mosley Wetzel et al., 2017), and a rotatory peer supervision model containing a training on constructive supervisory feedback (Amini & Gholami, 2018). The studies focused on the characteristics, roles, and significance of supervisors (Barahona, 2019; Barnawi, 2016), and the factors impeding successful mentoring practices (Kourieos, 2019). Positive effects of mentoring such as obtaining skills of subject matter knowledge, self-reflection and autonomy were discussed as crucial elements in a number of studies (Ali & Al-Adawi, 2013; Kourieos, 2019; Ong'ondo & Borg, 2011). Furthermore, the efficacy of supervision, the contribution of supervisory post-conferences to teachers' professional growth, the role of mentoring, student teachers' needs and expectations of the mentors, identity, and power dynamics were the remarkable topics discussed within the supervisory practice in English Language Teaching domain (Agheshteh & Mehrpour, 2021; Donaghue, 2020a). Moreover, studies that focused on the discourse analysis of the interaction between supervisors and supervisees in terms of supervisory feedback were highlighted, and the process and product of mentoring with a focus on mentor and mentee interaction were examined (Donaghue, 2020b; Engin, 2015; Le & Vasquez, 2011; Mena et al., 2015; Smith & Lewis, 2015). The essence of supervisory feedback and norms of interaction were among the subjects widely discussed in the studies synthesized (Akcan & Tatar, 2010; Ali & Al-Adawi, 2013; Copland, 2012; Engin, 2015; Getu & Teka, 2018). More specifically, the focus of these studies were on topics such as the adoption of mitigation in supervisory discourse to attain message clarity and politeness while delivering negative feedback (Agheshteh, 2019), the use of compliments, criticisms, and suggestions (Atefinia & Alavinia, 2019), speech acts (Le & Vasquez, 2011), mediation (Yoon & Kim, 2019), and approaches and questioning strategies adopted by mentors towards more facilitative and catalytic supervisions (Engin, 2013b; Smith & Lewis, 2015). Lawson et al.'s (2015) systematic review also showed that the aims of the reviewed studies on language teachers supervision research centered around approaches taken to mentoring, the process of mentoring, the viewpoints of pre-service teachers on issues such as efficacy, beliefs and experiences as well as challenges and problems encountered. This meta-synthesis went beyond these focal points found in this earlier review considering the micro-structures of language and feedback under the macro or meso layers of institutional backgrounds in which supervision has taken place.

The Methodologies Used in the Reviewed Studies

The reviewed studies employed a number of research designs and data collection tools. Case study methodology was employed in sixteen out of fifty-three studies with a total of 231 participants consisting of supervisors (n=64), pre-service teachers (PSTs) (n=151) and in-service teachers (ISTs) (n=16) (e.g., Akcan & Tatar, 2010; Barnawi, 2016; Chen & Cheng, 2013; Kuter, 2016; Lin et al., 2019; Mosley Wetzel et al., 2017; Nguyen & Parr, 2018; Ong'ondo & Borg, 2011; Smith & Lewis, 2015; Yamamura & Okazaki, 2019). Fifteen studies utilized a discourse analytic perspective consisting of a linguistic ethnographic analysis (e.g., Copland, 2011; 2012; 2015; Donaghue, 2018; 2020a; 2020b; 2020c), discourse analysis (e.g., Le & Vasquez, 2011; Mena et al., 2015; Mosley Wetzel et al., 2017), conversation analysis (e.g., Lewis & Wagner, 2023a; 2023b; Wagner & Lewis, 2021), and a micro genetic analysis (e.g., Yoon & Kim, 2019). Studies using a discourse analytic perspective had thirty-one supervisors, thirty-seven in-service teachers and fifty-five pre-service teachers. However, two studies among these did not report the number of the supervisors (e.g., Yoon & Kim, 2019). The other approaches applied were an interpretive phenomenology (e.g., Abdullah Al-Malki, 2020), a longitudinal action research (e.g., Vásquez & Reppen, 2007), and a narrative-based

research approach (e.g., Nguyen & Parr, 2018). A mixed-methods design with a qualitative focus was also applied in three studies (e.g., Agheshteh & Mehrpour, 2021; Atefinia & Alavinia, 2019; Louw et al., 2014). Furthermore, fifteen studies did not specify the research approach used explicitly, yet the readers could infer the approach from these studies from data analysis tools and procedures (e.g., Agheshteh, 2019; Barahona, 2019; Donaghue, 2015; Engin, 2013a; 2013b).

As to the ways of data collection, studies employed a number of qualitative data collection tools such as work shadowing observations (e.g., Barahona, 2019; Chen & Cheng, 2013; Le & Vasquez, 2011; Smith & Lewis, 2015; Ong'ondo & Borg, 2011), stimulated recall conferences (e.g., Mena et al., 2015; Yoon & Kim, 2019), pre and post observation interviews (e.g., Copland, 2012), lesson plans, and reflections (e.g., Akcan & Tatar, 2010; Kuter, 2016; Lindahl & Baecher, 2015). Extracts of post-lesson conferences, observations, and semi-structured interviews were the mostly used data collection tools in qualitative studies (n=32), followed by observational field notes (n=14), dialogue journaling (n=8), focus group interviews (n=5), and stimulated recalls (n=4). Additionally, some studies made use of both qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments to construct in-depth data about the perspectives and practices on supervisory feedback (e.g., Agheshteh & Mehrpour, 2021; Atefinia & Alavinia, 2019; de Dios Martínez Agudo, 2016). Table 3. demonstrates the main characteristics of the methodology used in the synthesized studies.

Table 3. Main characteristics of the methodology used in the synthesized studies

Research approach	Data collection tools	Examples
Qualitative (e.g., exploratory case study, multiple case study, action research, interpretive phenomenology, linguistic ethnographic analysis, and micro genetic analysis)	● *Observation	Barnawi (2016); Khaef & Karimnia (2021); Nguyen (2022)
	● *Interviews	Abdullah Al-Malki et al. (2020); Li et al. (2023)
	● *Extracts of post-observation feedback conferences	Algraini (2021); Arshavskaya (2016); Copland (2011); Donaghue (2020a; 2020b; 2020c); Lewis & Wagner (2023a; 2023b)
	● Focus group interviews	Amini & Gholami (2018); Mehrpour & Agheshteh (2017)
	● A work shadowing observation	Barahona (2019)
	● *Fieldnotes	Copland (2012, 2015)
	● Stimulated recalls	Engin (2013b); Hyland & Lo (2006); Mena et al. (2015)
Both qualitative and quantitative focused research	● Reflective journals	Gan (2014); Kuter (2016)
	● Lesson plans	Lindahl & Baecher (2015)
	● Interviews, a questionnaire, and post-observation feedback conferences	Agheshteh & Mehrpour (2021)
	● Student teacher diaries, transcripts of feedback sessions, a course evaluation questionnaire, and post-course emails	Kurtoglu-Hooton (2016)
	● Observations, transcribed meetings, written questionnaires and interviews	Vásquez (2004)
	● A questionnaire and a focus group interview, and field notes	Ali & Al-Adawi (2013)

*Most frequently used data collection tools are: *Extracts of post-observation feedback conferences -

*Observation - *Interviews - *Field notes

The Participants in the Studies Reviewed

This meta-synthesis encompassed a wide array of studies conducted with language teachers and supervisors in many countries as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Countries of participants

Country	No.	Country	No.	Country	No.	Country	No.
USA	10	Hong Kong	3	Chile	1	South Africa	1
Iran	7	China	3	Cyprus	1	Vietnam	1
Turkey	5	Saudi Arabia	2	Ethiopia	1	Australia	1
UK	5	Spain	2	Taiwan	1	Kenya	1
UAE	4	Oman	2	Thailand	1	Japan	1

The studies reviewed in this study had a spectrum of participants that consisted of pre-service English language teachers, in-service English language teachers, coordinating teachers at practicum schools, mentors, university supervisors, and principals working at primary and secondary schools, and university contexts.

This study demonstrated that most of the studies on supervision in language teaching research were carried out with pre-service teachers. Overall, twenty-nine out of fifty-three studies had pre-service teachers as research subjects (e.g., Akcan & Tatar, 2010; de Dios Martínez Agudo, 2016; Yoon & Kim, 2019), whereas twenty-two studies illustrated the experiences of in-service teachers (e.g., Agheshteh & Mehrpour, 2021; Atefinia & Alavinia, 2019; Donaghue, 2020; Lindahl & Baecher, 2015; Mehrpour & Agheshteh, 2017). Two studies also focused only on the experiences of the supervisors (Khaef & Karimnia, 2021; Lin et al., 2019). Moreover, in some studies MA TESOL interns were the participants (e.g., Le & Vasquez, 2011; Smith & Lewis, 2015). Furthermore, there were a mixture of participants in these studies from different settings such as in-service teachers and university supervisors (Mehrpour & Agheshteh, 2017), pre-service teachers, school mentors and university supervisors (de Dios Martínez Agudo, 2016; Ong'ondo & Borg, 2011), a written corpus consisting of supervisory reports of in-service teachers (Atefinia & Alavinia, 2019), student teachers, university supervisors, teacher educators, cooperating teachers and coordinators (Getu & Teka, 2018). Figure 4 illustrates the distribution of participants among the synthesized studies.

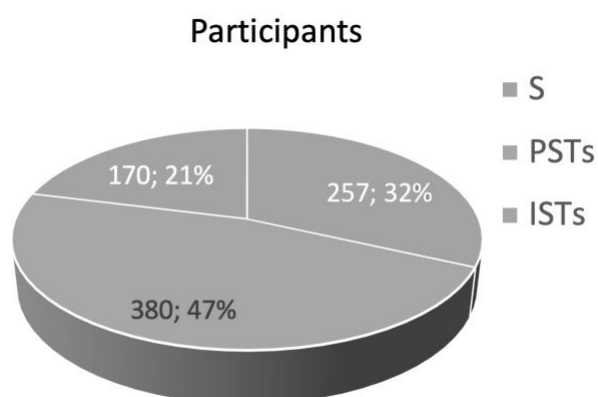


Figure 4. The distribution of participants (n = 807). PSTs: Pre-service Teachers- S: Supervisors- ISTs: In-service Teachers.

The General Outcomes in the Reviewed Studies

This section shows an illustration of the outcomes emerging as a result of the synthesis of the findings of the reviewed studies. Table 5 demonstrates the main outcomes emerged after the synthesis of the selected studies. An analysis of the findings of the selected studies showed that the focus of the reviewed studies centered on supervisees, supervisors and the supervision process.

Among the selected studies that had a focus on supervisees one common theme was power dynamics that was subdivided into the categories of:

1. confronting supervisee identities (Donaghue, 2020c; Li et al., 2023; Wagner & Lewis, 2021)
2. submissive supervisee identities (Kourieos, 2019; Li et al., 2023),
3. autonomy (Abdullah Al-Malki et al., 2020; Barnawi, 2016; Hyland & Lo, 2006),
4. discourse strategies used by supervisees (Lewis & Wagner, 2023a).

From the perspectives of the supervisors, the prevalent issues identified in the synthesized studies were:

1. identity (Arshavskaya, 2015),
2. identity and discourse (Donaghue, 2020a),
3. identity and power (Donaghue, 2018; 2020b; 2020c), and
4. supervisors' role in supervision (Barahona, 2019).

In addition, the main outcomes of the reviewed studies regarding the supervision process and feedback included:

1. face-saving feedback (Agheshteh, 2019; Amini & Gholami, 2018; Copland, 2015)
2. scaffolding feedback (Engin, 2013a; 2015)
3. confirmatory feedback (Kurtoglu-Hooton, 2016)
4. questioning strategies (Engin, 2013b; Smith & Lewis, 2015)
5. appraisals, rules, and artifacts (Mena et al., 2016)
6. subject-specific feedback (Gan, 2014; Gan & Yang, 2018; Yamamura & Okazaki, 2019; Lindahl & Baecher, 2015)
7. affective feedback (Lewis & Wagner, 2023b), and
8. politeness strategies (Vásquez, 2004).

The outcomes related to the negative experiences encountered commonly during the supervision process in the synthesized studies were:

1. a lack of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) in feedback (Getu & Teka, 2018; Ong'ondo & Borg, 2011)
2. the presence of negative feedback (Algraini, 2021; Donaghue, 2020c; Estaji & Ghiasvand, 2022; Gan, 2014; Nguyen, 2022; Ong'ondo & Borg, 2011), and
3. absence of dialogic speech (Copland, 2012; 2015; Louw et al., 2014).

Regarding the supervisory styles, it has been discovered that there is still a presence of the use of a classic prescriptive approach in the reviewed studies (e.g., Agheshteh & Mehrpour, 2021; Akcan & Tatar, 2010; Barahona, 2019; Kourieos, 2019; Li et al., 2023). However, a number of synthesized studies also adopted collaborative and reflective supervisory approaches (e.g., Akcan & Tatar, 2010; Kuter, 2016; Mosley Wetzels et al., 2017), and a Clinical Supervision

Model (CSM) (Khaef & Karimnia, 2021). There were also cases in which both directive and reflective approaches were in action (Chen & Cheng, 2013; Donaghue, 2015; Nguyen & Parr, 2018). Thus, there was a mixed trend in the synthesized studies regarding the power dynamics, supervisory feedback, and supervisory styles adopted.

Table 5. Main outcomes of analysis

Main focus/ Themes	Categories	Prominent outcomes	Examples	
Supervisees (PSTs/ ISTs)	Power dynamics- Confronting supervisee identities	Face threatening talk, such as negative evaluation was confronted by trainees through strategies such as mitigating or intensifying the face threats. Teachers claimed powerful identities.	Copland (2011); Donaghue (2020c); Li et al. (2023); Wagner & Lewis (2021)	
	Submissive supervisee identities	The supervisees did not confront the prescriptive styles of mentoring.	Kourieos (2019); Li et al. (2023)	
	Autonomous pre/in-service teachers	The discourses of the post-method era that were autonomy, liberation, and self-reflexivity prevailed.	Barnawi (2016)	
	Deprived of autonomy/ agency Discourse strategies used by supervisees	There was directiveness and an imbalance in power relations. Complaints could act as a catalyst for reflection, emphasizing problems and eliciting advice. Yet, it could also pose a challenge in the supervising process to the mentor.	Abdullah Al-Malki et al. (2020); Hyland & Lo (2006) Lewis & Wagner (2023a)	
Supervisors	Identity	The mentors displayed varying identities from displaying an expert role to having a reciprocal relationship with mentees.	Arshavskaya (2016)	
	Identity and discourse	Display questions were used by the supervisors to perform a leader identity, while these questions also allowed teachers to claim positive identities.	Donaghue (2020a)	
	Identity and power Supervisors' role in supervision	A contentious and critical stance to acclaim the identity and power in discourse dominated. Teachers were depicted as mothers, carers, and quality assurers.	Donaghue (2018; 2020b; 2020c) Barahona (2019)	
	The supervision process	Face-saving feedback	The supervisors used “above-the-utterance-level” mitigation, qualm indicators, modal verbs, interrogatives, clause structures, and hedging modifiers, mild criticisms, alternative suggestions, a ‘praise-suggestion’ format, and positive appraisals.	Agheshteh (2019); Amini & Gholami (2018); Copland (2015); Le & Vasquez (2011); Lin et al. (2019); Mehrpour & Agheshteh (2017); Mukeredzi (2017)
		Scaffolding feedback	Five levels of intervention for scaffolding were identified: general open question, specific Wh-question, closed yes/no question, slot-fill prompts, and telling. Using short and focused questions on a particular subject, recapping, and prospective talk, and responsive mediation also increased opportunities for scaffolding.	Engin (2013a; 2015); Mehrpour & Agheshteh (2017); Yoon & Kim (2019)
		Confirmatory feedback	Mentioning what went well in a lesson that is confirmatory feedback has the potential to promote confidence and motivation of student teachers.	Kurtoglu-Hooton (2016)
		Questioning strategies	Telling, fill-in-the-slot, recall, and hypothetical question types, broad to narrow questions, broad questions within a directive framework, and broad questions that caused critical self-reflection, and specific non-judgmental questions were employed.	Engin (2013b); Smith & Lewis (2015)

Table 5. Main outcomes of analysis (continued)

The supervision process (continued)	Appraisals, rules, and artifacts	The use of appraisals, rules, and artifacts was suggested.	Mena et al. (2016)
	Subject-specific feedback	Feedback on the issues like the consistency between the lesson objectives in the lesson plan and the implementation, target language use, teacher talk, feedback, and instruction giving were discussed.	Gan (2014); Gan & Yang (2018); Yamamura & Okazaki (2019); Lindahl & Baecher (2015)
	Affective feedback	The empathetic relate-to-self tellings showed shared experience between the mentors and mentees through normalizing problems and minimizing status differences between the two parties.	Lewis & Wagner (2023b)
	Politeness strategies	Negative politeness strategies were used to minimize the intrusion of supervisors' suggestions, while positive politeness strategies served to construct a feeling of collegiality or harmony.	Vásquez (2004)
	Lack of PCK in feedback	"A one size fits all approach" in which PCK was ignored in giving feedback.	Getu & Teka (2018); Ong'ondo & Borg (2011)
	Negative feedback	The Evaluation/ Directing functions were used frequently, while Reflection Enhancing Elicit function was rarely used by supervisors. Authoritative and evaluative feedback was used.	Algraini (2021); Donaghue (2020c); Estaji & Ghiasvand (2022); Gan (2014); Nguyen (2022); Ong'ondo & Borg (2011)
	Both positive and negative feedback	The trainer provided both positive and negative evaluation through a dialogic talk.	Copland (2015)
	Dialogic speech (+*)	Supervisors encouraged supervisees to talk more, giving the floor to supervisees as speakers through meta-discursive positioning.	Vásquez & Reppen (2007)
Dialogic speech (-*)	The trainers did not hold a ground for a dialogic speech in feedback conferences, yet the trainees contested the legitimacy of the talk without threatening the face.	Copland (2012; 2015)	
Dialogic speech (+/-*)	Supervisors spared a room for dialogic space and reflection for trainees, while there was also an instance of authoritative voice, which was mitigated to stabilize affective anxieties.	Louw et al. (2014)	
Supervisory styles	The use of a classic prescriptive approach	Supervisors employed classic prescriptive approaches.	Agheshteh & Mehrpour (2021); Akcan & Tatar (2010); Barahona (2019); Kourieos (2019); Li et al. (2023)
	A collaborative/reflective supervisory approach	The university supervisors had a collaborative supervisory style.	Akcan & Tatar (2010); Kuter (2016); Mosley Wetzel et al. (2017)
	A Clinical Supervision Model (CSM)	Critical thinking was triggered, and more reflective and constructive feedback was provided.	Khaef & Karimnia (2021)
	A directive + reflective approach	The supervisor adopted both collaborative and directive approaches.	Chen & Cheng (2013); Donaghue (2015); Nguyen & Parr (2018)

+*: the presence of; -*: the absence of

Discourse Analysis of the Supervisory Interaction: The Nature of the Supervisory Feedback

Following the general outcomes, the successive sections discuss the synthesized findings of the reviewed studies. The first point of our argument regards the nature of supervisee-

supervisor talk. The synthesis results demonstrated that a number of studies on supervisory practices of ELT teachers had a focus on strategies used by mentor teachers during post-observation conferences (Copland, 2015; Engin, 2013a; 2013b; 2015; Lewis & Wagner, 2023a, 2023b; Nguyen, 2022). For instance, Engin (2015) investigated the use of scaffolding in trainer talk in post-observation feedback sessions via linguistic analysis. The use of strategies found effective in the mentor and mentee talk were recapping, prospective talk, relating to former incidents, meta-comments, and the use of shorter and more focused questions that give more chances of scaffolding to the mentees.

In the studies implementing a reflective style of supervision, discourse strategies such as interruptions to increase the force of the message, and a criticism-compliment pattern, apologies and softeners for face-saving (Copland, 2012), cued elicitation, recapping, prospective talk, and meta comments (Engin, 2015), responsive mediation (Yoon & Kim, 2019), above-the-utterance mitigation, reckoning the Zone of Proximal Development of teachers, and being contextually sensitive (Agheshteh, 2019; Mehrpour & Agheshteh, 2017), recall and hypothetical question types (Engin, 2013b), empathetic relate-to-self tellings (Lewis & Wagner, 2023b) were used in delivering supervisory feedback. The employment of revoicing and co-construction were also found as ways to direct mentees to transform their teacher identities (Mosley Wetzel et al., 2017). Elicitation technique was found as another effective element of supervision encouraging mentees to analyze their own teaching (Engin, 2015; Le & Vasquez's, 2011). The use of a top-down approach by moving through more general to more specific questions was also found to encourage the mentees to contemplate upon the rationale behind their instructional choices. Also, in the use of compliments, explaining why certain activities worked during that specific part of the lesson was identified as an influential strategy. Moreover, intensifiers such as 'very' and 'absolutely' were suggested to be used to increase the positive power of supervision. It was also argued that suggestions were needed to be proposed in the forms of alternatives rather than directives with the use of 'should' and 'must'. Similarly, in the delivery of criticisms respecting the self-esteem and confidence of the mentees by softening criticisms with methods like mitigators, mild criticisms and indirect messages were argued to be useful methods (Le & Vasquez, 2011). Semantic mitigation devices like qualm indicators, and hedging modifiers, which included minimizing adjuncts, authority hedges, modal adverbs, modal verbs, interrogatives, and clause structure were also proposed as useful syntactic mitigation devices in the supervisory discourse.

Other studies also studied the nature of supervisory feedback with a focus on general pedagogic knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (Getu & Teka, 2018). It was discovered that the feedback provided by the supervisors to student teachers covered only the skills of general pedagogical knowledge rather than a combination of pedagogical content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. That is, the student teachers were only able to get feedback about the skills of general pedagogical practice such as classroom management, lesson planning and time management, and did not go through an English Language Teaching (ELT) pedagogy informed evaluation. To confront this gap, towards the aim of enhancing ELT teachers' and teacher supervisors' awareness of the pedagogical content knowledge, Lindahl and Baecher (2015) investigated the content and coherence of supervisory feedback in terms of focus on explicit language features, analyzing teachers' language awareness in pre, during and post observation feedback sessions as to three domains: user, analyst, and teacher, which referred to procedural, declarative, and pedagogical content knowledge of language respectively. The findings showed that during the pre-observation phase, declarative knowledge about the language was

emphasized, whereas teachers and students focused on pedagogical practices in the later phases of the supervisory cycle more. However, explicit feedback about language was needed to be provided at every phase of the supervisory feedback cycle. Therefore, it was argued that teachers' awareness of the knowledge about the use, structure, and pedagogy needed to be increased so that language-focused supervisory feedback could be delivered.

Akcan and Tatar (2010) also explored the nature of feedback given by the cooperating teachers and university supervisors in a Turkish EFL context by illustrating a distinction between generic teaching skills and pedagogical content knowledge. The strategies implemented by the university supervisors were hearing the voices of student teachers first, pointing at mistakes using direct statements by centering on particular teaching activities, appropriateness of these activities and transition between each one, maintaining students' interest in the lesson, increasing the flexibility of student teachers considering the contextual differences, and commenting on the ELT specific skills like pronunciation, the use of voice, intonation, and grammar rules. On the other hand, the feedback from the cooperating teachers was more situation-specific, centering on generic teaching skills through the use of direct descriptive statements on the issues such as classroom management, target language use, and the properness of teaching activities without neither giving elaborative feedback to student teachers nor allowing them to reflect on their own teaching.

Specific questioning strategies such as funnelling, scaffold, springboard, and non-judgmental questions that would help elevate the awareness of supervisees were also proposed to be used in supervisory discourse (Smith & Lewis, 2015). In funneling technique, mentors were advised to ask broad questions then move to narrower questions that would lead to a new understanding in teaching, while providing the teacher with needed direction within a directive style of observation. Second, in scaffold technique there was a move away from a directive to a facilitative mentoring style in which the mentoring began with the use of scaffolding, and it continued with teachers leading the discussion themselves. The third questioning strategy suggested to be implemented was the springboard in which the mentor asked broad questions to the mentee that would trigger deeper reflection. The last style was the use of specific non-judgmental questions via which the teachers would be encouraged to explain their rationale for their teaching strategies in a collegial manner. It was put forward that if teachers were encouraged to choose amongst these strategies, a more constructivist perspective could be attained.

Illustrating a case of a reflective practice, the why questions in the post-observation interaction by student teachers were also found to be a contributing factor that trigger more critical thinking about supervisees' pedagogical practices (Akcan & Tatar, 2010). Other techniques used by the supervisors to prompt the supervisees to reflect on the lessons consisted of recalling, which referred to making references to teaching instances in the classroom, extending an observation via focusing on particular moments in teaching, talking about surprising events in the lesson, and making plans for future practices (Wetzel et al., 2017). Motivating supervisees by allowing them to self-evaluate themselves through reflection on their own teaching to be able to correct, assess and regulate their teaching practices independently was also reported to be an ideal scenario for language teacher supervision (Lin et al., 2019).

Conversely, it was also reported that supervisors often resorted to directive language and they were unable to use *wh-* questions to transform sentences into inquiries. The tag questions did not also result in dialogic interactions all the time, and monologic speech was dominant in

feedback conferences (Agheshteh, 2019; Engin, 2015). To alleviate this pain, Yoon and Kim (2019) suggested the use of Vygotsky's (1978) social cultural perspective to be adopted as a principle in supervision. It was argued that through the use of 'responsive mediation' the mentees could reach an internal plane where they could perform agency in their teaching, abandoning an initial state of a social plane in which the mentees' actions were mediated during the interaction with the mentor. During the interaction, when mentees showed signs of cognitive or emotional dissonance or emerging ZPDs that illustrated that they were in need of help, the mentors would provide them with assistance by implementing a strategy of responsive mediation via which they could give direct externalized or implicit help with a developmentally sensitive stance that would result in learner uptake. Therefore, it was suggested that the use of instructional talk, back channeling, elaboration questions, and collaborative dialogues were methods that could mediate a dialogic conversation between the mentors and mentees.

All in all, the studies in this section referred to the strategies used by mentors in the supervisory talk. The results suggested that there was a need for the supervisors to use instructional talk with implementing interactional tools such as scaffolding, compliments with intensifiers, suggestions, mild criticisms with mitigators, and meta comments. Through the analysis of the discourse of studies and bringing the features of effective supervision feedback to the attention of the student teachers, in-service teachers, supervisors, and other stakeholders in the education system, better practices of supervision could be carried out thanks to an enhanced awareness of what constitutes an effective scaffolding and nurturing supervising talk.

Pedagogies of Mentoring, the Roles of Enacted by Supervisors, Power Dynamics, and Challenges

The findings of this study have demonstrated that the use of a variety of supervisor models such as directive and reflective approaches, and the issues of identity fluidity and power dynamics were dominant themes among the studies reviewed. With the purpose of determining if the use of certain pedagogies in mentoring would lead to better results, researchers compared the use of different mentoring styles adopted by language teachers. For instance, Mena et al. (2015) examined the generation of pedagogical practical knowledge in three modes of mentoring. The findings showed that in mentor and mentee dialogue, narrative knowledge was constructed via appraisals in dialogue journaling mostly, while inferential knowledge was generated by student teachers to describe their practices with the employment of rules and artifacts in regular conferences and stimulated recall meetings. All the same, it was argued that face-to-face interactions allowed for a more mutual understanding by "extracting regularities from the practice" (p. 11). As another technique to support the supervisory style adopted, the use of videos of classroom teaching was also suggested to be used among the studies reviewed, as it was found to be effective among student teachers who would become more self-reflective and evaluative through analyzing their practice deeply within the perspectives of a collaborative supervision model (Eroz-Tuga, 2013; Kaneko-Marques, 2015).

Identity fluidity and power dynamics were other themes found in the literature in relation to pedagogies of supervision. In the studies analyzed, there was a focus on the supervisory styles exerted on pre-service and in-service teachers, and identities that were revealed between supervisors and supervisees during post-observation feedback sessions. It was discussed in the studies if the contextual factors would direct supervisors to deviate from reflective supervisory styles because of the demand by the education system in the country, and student teachers' expectations. For instance, in Barahona (2019) it was illustrated that the primary roles of the

supervisors in the practicum were to evaluate the student teachers' performance and provide them with emotional support by a carer role in the process. Mentors reported using a directive style of supervision at the expense of promoting autonomy and self-reflection of student teachers to meet the expectations of teacher standards in the system. Similarly, Ongondo and Borg (2011) discovered in their studies that a directive style of mentoring was used extensively in the context of Kenya in an undergraduate level practicum course due to the contextual restrictions. The findings showed that feedback was evaluative and directive in nature, and mentors only filled out competency-based evaluation forms that had discrete point evaluative criteria for generic teaching skills. The role of the student teachers was mainly receptive, as they did not have many chances to get involved in a collaborative and reflective dialogue about their teaching with the supervisors. The supervision process was heavily directive, as the student teachers obeyed to what they were told to do next time in their teaching practices without any agency because of the pressure of being assessed. Consequently, the impacts of the supervision on student teachers were a fear of supervision and adopting an attitude to please the supervisors rather than focusing on the teaching and learning process based on the contextual and individual factors in the classrooms.

Although there was a discrepancy between the studies conducted in different educational settings as a result of the constraining contextual factors, the employment of a collaborative model of supervision through Vygotsky's (1978) social cultural perspective stood out as an effective conceptual background with its mediating elements for language teacher supervision. For instance, unlike Ongondo and Borg (2011), the supervisor in Wetzel et al.'s (2017) study in the USA context did not act like the initiator of the conversation and moved away from a transmission approach to mentoring, asking the supervisee open-ended questions that allowed a room for reflection. Through a problem-posing mentoring style, the use of revoicing and co-construction allowed to hear the voice of the supervisee and actively construct her identity as a teacher. In Barnawi (2016), supervisors in Saudi Arabia also adopted an attitude responsive to supervisees' needs, indicating that supervisees were allowed a space to challenge the opposing beliefs and collaborate with teachers by being attentive to their ideas during the supervisory process. The roles adopted by teachers included autonomous decision-makers, analyzers, inventors, and critical transformative practitioners.

Similar to the results of the studies conducted in the literature (Barnawi, 2016; Wetzel et al., 2017), supervisees at a Gulf-State federal tertiary institution in Donaghue (2020c) discovered confronting identities in supervisees in the face of criticisms directed at their teaching practices. On the one hand, although the supervisor in this context claimed an expert identity by relying on the power of expertise and experience, there was also no mere supervisory style conducted by the supervisor. Rather, the supervisor displayed robust identities and changed the nature of feedback sessions by assuming a collaborative role in the supervision process. Additionally, according to the views of mentees in Atefinia and Alavinia (2019), a positive and caring atmosphere was also formed by going beyond the power imbalance between the mentors and mentees with the use of effective interpersonal skills.

In relation to alignments between supervisors and supervisees in ELT practicum experiences, Agheshteh and Mehrpour (2021) also explored power balance between supervisors and in-service English language teachers in the Iranian context. They found that the supervisory experiences were in line with prescriptive methods, as findings showed supervisors' high tendency to control in-service teachers and bolster sameness among teachers' teaching

practices. Moreover, teachers mentioned in interviews that supervisors were abusing their power as an authority by threatening with actions such as promotion withdrawals. They were also denied to voice their opinions during the supervision, as supervisors suppressed them to come up with their own solutions. Analysis of post-observation talk also illustrated a dominant use of position power and reward power. Consequently, teachers voiced a need for expert power stemming from theory, second language research, competence, and skill.

Discussion, Conclusion and Implications

This study demonstrated a synthesis of the studies on supervision and English language education. The findings showed the trends in the research focuses, methodologies adopted such as research approaches and data collection tools along with a profile of the participants. Additionally, the outcomes of these studies were reviewed and synthesized on the basis of the discourse analytic studies on the nature of the supervisory feedback, the different supervisory styles adopted by the teacher supervisors, and the perspectives, attitudes and beliefs of teachers and supervisors. The findings of these synthesized studies showed a number of discrepancies and implications for further research. First of all, the results of the synthesis suggested that there is a need to carry out more studies on supervisory discourse with in-service teachers, as the number of studies conducted with this group of participants as the supervisees are comparatively limited. It has also been found that quite a number of reviewed studies did not report the methodologies they used. However, for transparency of the results and the replicability of the findings, future researchers should describe their research approach more clearly.

Moreover, it has been discovered that directive supervisory models were still in practice among the synthesized studies (Agheshteh & Mehrpour, 2021; Kourieos, 2019). The main issues concentrated on the adoption of a directive style of mentoring based on the apprenticeship model of teaching versus a social-cultural perspective in supervision. It has been identified that in the directive style, the supervisors did not involve the supervisees in the supervisory talk, and their role was mainly to evaluate the teachers based on discrete point competency-based behavioristic criteria. Thus, the feedback was authoritative and evaluative (Donaghue, 2020c; Estaji & Ghiasvand, 2022; Gan, 2014; Nguyen, 2022). The studies have demonstrated that many supervisors were not able to implement a reflective model of supervision that would have triggered self-reflection by promoting reflection in practice, critical thinking, and autonomy in teachers (Agheshteh, 2019; Agheshteh & Mehrpour, 2021; Barahona, 2019; Kourieos, 2019). On the other hand, there were also cases among the synthesized studies in which a reflective style of mentoring was enacted with the supervisees being indulged in reflective teaching practices. Among the factors that were found to be effective in the supervisory process by the supervisees were peer feedback, continuous, instant and constructive feedback and flexible and receptive attitude by the supervisors. Scaffolding as a common theme in many of the studies reviewed also emerged as an effective paradigm encouraging more learner interaction looking at the results of the studies implementing a discourse analysis of the supervisory talk (Getu & Teka, 2018).

Therefore, this meta-synthesis is a detailed account of supervisory practices of English language supervisors. Through analyzing the results of the studies discussed here in terms of the nature of the feedback, supervisory styles, and discourse conventions, this study would shed light on the language teachers' and supervisors' experiences about the supervisory practices implemented at schools in various countries all over the world. However, this study

also has its own limitations. The limitations of this meta-synthesis might be related to the search strategy, participants, and educational settings. Even though the key terms used to search for articles in the databases were comprehensive and inclusive, some related studies may have been missed. To minimize the risk of omission, twenty-five sets of keywords were applied in the data search phase to four different databases, including databases that have the broadest scope in terms of the studies in educational research (e.g., ERIC). The employment of appraisal criteria for the selected studies improved the limitations of evidence in the quality of the studies included. However, the comparison of findings between studies is debatable, as each study had different contexts for the supervision process and the supervisors in the synthesized studies had varying experience in the profession of supervision, which might have affected the outcomes of each study. In the scope of this review, studies that had a qualitative or qualitative-weighted methodologies were reviewed and a qualitative meta-synthesis paradigm was adopted. Other studies that encompass a quantitative analysis stance such as a meta-analysis study could be implemented in a future review for the purpose of getting numerical statistical results of the impact of the use of different supervision styles on the factors like effectiveness of teaching, anxiety levels and motivation of language teachers and learners. It is necessary for English language teacher supervisors to conduct a collaborative supervision style in delivering feedback in teaching practice post-conference meetings. However, there is a need for supervisors to learn the strategies for giving supervisory feedback to teachers, as there were many instances of a directive supervisory talk in the findings of the synthesized studies. Therefore, there is a need towards better training of supervisors who would guide student teachers and in-service teachers to improve teaching practices. For this purpose, language teacher supervisor training programs could be founded, which would help supervisors to comprehend effective practices of supervisory feedback through examination of supervisee-supervisor talk. Moreover, there is a need for more studies to be conducted through action research designs and experimental methodologies to analyze the effect of the particular supervisory feedback concepts on the supervising process. The examination of the supervisory talk would aid teachers and researchers in illustrating the practices of teacher supervisors, and demonstrating clear-cut examples of how to give effective feedback to ELT teachers. In conclusion, there is a need for adopting a reflective mentoring style and raising collaborative supervisors, because as Ulvik and Smith (2011, p. 522) put forward, “with a qualified mentor, mentees are encouraged to master practical skills and, in addition, to take risks and they may develop beyond their mentor’s level. With a maestro, the mentees learn to master the tradition”.

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Appendix: Synthesized Articles

Author(s)	Source	Title
1. Abdullah Al-Malki et al. (2020)	Arab World English Journal	Feedback on the classroom performance of re-service English language teachers in Oman
2. Agheshteh (2019)	Issues in Language Teaching	Deconstructing the discourse: Mitigation in the supervisory discourse of language teacher supervisors in Iran
3. Agheshteh & Mehrpour (2021)	Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research	Teacher autonomy and supervisor authority: Power dynamics in language teacher supervision in Iran.
4. Akcan & Tatar (2010)	Teacher Development	An investigation of the nature of feedback given to pre-service English teachers during their practice teaching experience
5. Algraini (2021)	Arab World English Journal	Assessing reflection as a tool of female teacher's professional development in Saudi EFL post-observation conferences
6. Ali & Al-Adawi (2013)	Higher Education Studies	Providing effective feedback to EFL student teachers
7. Amini & Gholami (2018)	Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability	Professional development of EFL teachers through rotatory peer supervision
8. Arshavskaya (2016)	International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education	Complexity in mentoring in a pre-service teacher practicum: A case study approach
9. Atefinia & Alavinia (2019)	International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies	Supervisory feedback: The weight of compliments, criticisms and suggestions revisited
10. Barahona (2019)	Journal of Education for Teaching	What matters to supervisors and is this reflected in what they do? Analyzing the work of university supervisors of the practicum
11. Barnawi (2016)	Cogent Education	Dialogic investigations of teacher–supervisor relations in the TESOL landscape
12. Chen & Cheng (2013)	TESL-EJ	The supervisory process of EFL teachers: A case study
13. Copland (2011)	Journal of Pragmatics	Negotiating face in feedback conferences: A linguistic ethnographic analysis
14. Copland (2012)	Applied Linguistics	Legitimate talk in feedback conferences
15. Copland (2015)	Bloomsbury	Evaluative talk in feedback conferences
16. de Dios Martínez Agudo (2016)	Australian Journal of Teacher Education	What type of feedback do student teachers expect from their school mentors during practicum experience?
17. Donaghue (2015)	Bloomsbury	Differences between supervisors' espoused feedback styles and their discourse in post-observation meetings
18. Donaghue (2018)	Journal of Pragmatics	Relational work and identity negotiation in critical post observation teacher feedback
19. Donaghue (2020a)	Classroom Discourse	'Time to construct positive identities': Display questions in post observation teacher feedback
20. Donaghue (2020b)	Journal of Language, Identity & Education	Feedback talk as a means of creating, ratifying and normalising an institutionally valued teacher identity
21. Donaghue (2020c)	The Modern Language Journal	Teachers and supervisors negotiating identities of experience and power in feedback talk
22. Engin (2013a)	ELT Journal	Trainer talk: Levels of intervention
23. Engin (2013b)	European Journal of Teacher Education	Questioning to scaffold: An exploration of questions in pre-service teacher training feedback sessions

24. Engin (2015)	Classroom Discourse	Trainer talk in post-observation feedback sessions: An exploration of scaffolding
25. Estaji & Ghiasvand (2022)	Applied Research on English Language	Classroom supervision and professionalism: Matches and mismatches in the perceptions of novice and experienced teachers
26. Gan (2014)	Journal of Education for Teaching	Learning from interpersonal interactions during the practicum: A case study of non-native ESL student teachers
27. Gan & Yang (2018)	Journal of Asia TEFL	How prepared are the preservice ESL teachers to teach: Insights from university supervisor feedback
28. Getu & Teka (2018)	Journal of Teacher Education and Educators	Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) in Ethiopian secondary school teacher education practicum supervision
29. Hyland & Lo (2006)	Mentoring & Tutoring	Examining interaction in the teaching practicum: Issues of language, power and control
30. Khaef & Karimnia (2021)	Education Research International	The effects of implementing clinical supervision model on supervisors' teaching perspectives and qualifications: A case study in an EFL context
31. Kourieos (2019)	Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning	Problematizing school-based mentoring for pre-service primary English language teachers
32. Kurtoglu-Hooton (2016)	ELT Journal	From 'Plodder' to 'Creative': Feedback in teacher education
33. Kuter (2016)	Eğitim ve Bilim	Prospective teachers' and teachers' professional development through the collaborative mentoring kaleidoscope
34. Le & Vasquez (2011)	Teacher Development	Feedback in teacher education: Mentor discourse and intern perceptions
35. Lewis & Wagner (2023a)	ELT Journal	The potential of complaining as reflective practice in mentoring
36. Lewis & Wagner (2023b)	System	Empathy and professional support via relate-to-self in post-observation meetings
37. Li et al. (2023)	Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education	Exploring the characteristics of pre-service EFL teachers' practicum experiences: A complexity theory-based case study in China
38. Lin et al. (2019)	Journal of Education for Teaching	Enhancing student teacher motivation through mentor feedback on practicum reports: A case study
39. Lindahl & Baecher (2015)	ELT Journal	Teacher language awareness in supervisory feedback cycles
40. Louw et al. (2014)	Applied Linguistics	Teacher trainers' beliefs about feedback on teaching practice: Negotiating the tensions between authoritativeness and dialogic space
41. Mehrpour & Agheshteh (2017)	International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature	Supervisory feedback efficiency: Developing a framework based on Iranian EFL teachers' and supervisors' perceptions
42. Mena et al. (2015)	European Journal of Teacher Education	An analysis of three different approaches to student teacher mentoring and their impact on knowledge generation in practicum settings
43. Mosley Wetzel et al. (2017)	Teaching Education	Dialogue in the support of learning to teach: A case study of a mentor/mentee pair in a teacher education programme
44. Mukeredzi (2017)	Sage Open	Mentoring in a cohort model of practicum: Mentors and preservice teachers' experiences in a rural South African school
45. Nguyen & Parr (2018)	Springer	Mentoring practices and relationships during the EAL practicum in Australia: Contrasting narratives
46. Nguyen (2022)	Journal of Education for Teaching	Feedback as a tool in practicum-based learning to teach: A 'Gift' given or a 'Shared' practice?

47. Ong'ondo & Borg (2011)	Language Teaching Research	'We teach plastic lessons to please them': The influence of supervision on the practice of English language student teachers in Kenya
48. Smith & Lewis (2015)	ELT Journal	Toward facilitative mentoring and catalytic interventions
49. Vásquez (2004)	Linguistics and Education	"Very carefully managed": Advice and suggestions in post-observation meetings
50. Vásquez & Reppen (2007)	Language Awareness	Transforming practice: Changing patterns of participation in post-observation meetings
51. Wagner & Lewis (2021)	Journal of Pragmatics	Third-party complaints in teacher post-observation meetings
52. Yamamura & Okazaki (2019)	Memoirs of the Faculty of Human Development University of Toyama	A qualitative case study on the post-observation feedback in the practicum
53. Yoon & Kim (2019)	Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning	A sociocultural theoretical approach to understanding mentor–mentee interactions during a teaching English as a second language practicum at the Master's degree level

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